

SPENCER COUNTY, INDIANA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2022



DRAFT

SPENCER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

As our economic outlook and demographics are constantly evolving, Spencer County faces many new challenges that will shape county life well into the future. The Spencer County Comprehensive Plan was initiated in order to maintain a proper balance in the use of the county's land, encourage a high quality of development, and guide future growth within the jurisdiction of the Spencer County Plan Commission

The Comprehensive Plan is an official county policy guide which establishes goals and objectives to guide county development in a coordinated manner. Its purpose is to provide "for the promotion of public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, or the general welfare and for the sake of efficiency and economy in the process of development: (Indiana Code 36-7-4-501). Thus, the plan can be viewed as a blueprint for the future that identifies trends in population and land use, and provides the legal foundation for zoning and subdivision control. This document is the result of a detailed planning process. Existing conditions were identified throughout the county through extensive research, public workshops, and numerous discussions with Spencer County planning officials. Relationships and trends were analyzed and recommendations were made to help develop the policies that will guide future growth. As in every county, there are large quantities of knowledge, experience, and other resources within the citizen population. Comments and discussions at the public meetings were recorded and used to help form a basis for the recommendations made in the Comprehensive Plan. The intent of the public input process was to create a community based goals, objectives, and recommendations, The Comprehensive Plan embodies the spirit of public participation in the planning process, and the recommendations herein reflect this participation.

This plan reflects the current goals of Spencer County. As they adapt to shifting economic circumstances, the Comprehensive Plan will provide the framework upon which orderly growth can occur while maintaining the unique quality of life in Spencer County.

CHAPTER 1: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

A. REGIONAL CONTEXT

Spencer County is located in south central Indiana along the banks of the Ohio River. The county is comprised of 253,440 acres of 396 square miles and its topography ranges from legal floodplain along the river to rugged, hilly uplands in the north. The county seat is Rockport, located along the river in the south-central part of the county, thirty miles east of Evansville. The county is approximately one hundred eighteen miles southwest of Indianapolis, ninety miles southeast of Terre Haute, and seventy-five miles west of Louisville, Kentucky. Spencer County is easily accessible from surrounding locations. Interstate 64 (St Louis, MO to Louisville, KY) runs across the northern edge of the county. Main major national and state routes also pass through the County. U.S. Route 231 is the main north/south route connecting Spencer County to Kentucky across the Ohio River to the South. State Route 161 also travels south and crosses the Ohio River into Owensboro, Kentucky. State Routes 162 and 245 are two of the other main north/south routes running through the county. Major east/west routes through the county include State Route 62 across the northern section of the county, State Road 70 across the central portion of the county, and State Route 66 along the Ohio River in the southern portion of the county.

B. HISTORY OF SPENCER COUNTY

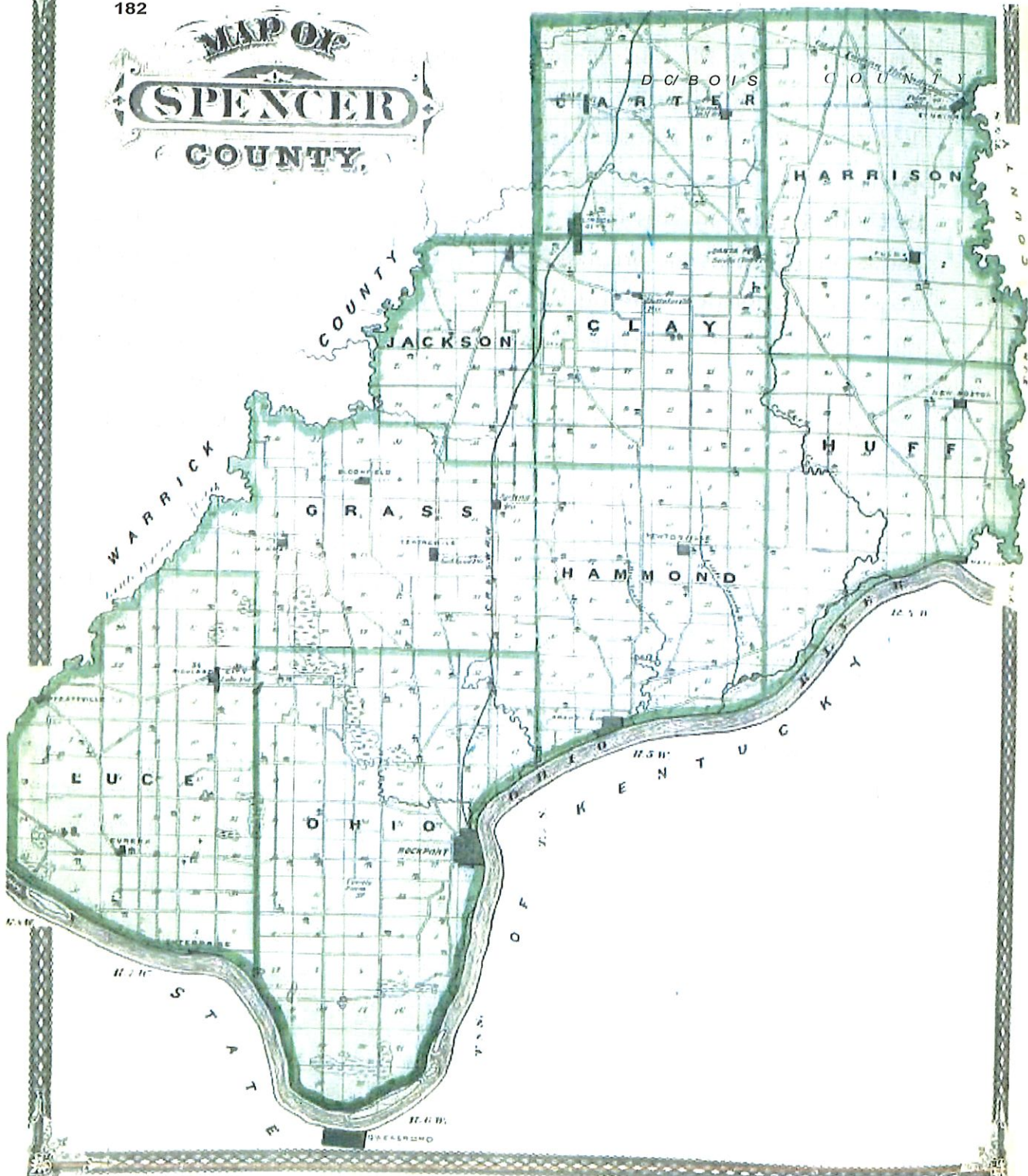
Spencer County has a rich and varied cultural history. The county was formed in 1818 and got its name from Captain Speir Spencer, a troop commander who fought and died at the battle of Tippecanoe. As with many counties along the Ohio River, Spencer County's early development can be traced to the river. Rockport, the county seat, is located on the river, and many other small communities grew along the river as well. As

the County's population grew, and as dependence on the river decreased, development spread northward throughout the county.

One family of historic settlers that are a cherished piece of Spencer County's history is Thomas Lincoln and his family (including Abraham Lincoln). In 1816, Mr. Lincoln bought a farmstead in northwestern Spencer County on the site that currently is the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial at Lincoln City. The Lincoln's lived in Spencer County for fourteen years. Several sites throughout the county have significant traces back to Abraham Lincoln and his family. The Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial stands on what was the original farm owned by the Lincolns. The memorial property also includes the burial site of Abe's mother, Nancy Hanks. The burial site of Abe's only sister Sarah Lincoln Grigsby is located at the Little Pigeon Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery in Lincoln State Park. At Rockport, a reconstructed village commemorates Lincoln's early days in the Hoosier state.

In 1854, the St Meinrad Archabbey and Seminary, one of the largest catholic seminaries in the country, was established at the town of St. Meinrad in the northeastern corner of the county. One of the seminary's students, German sculptor Herbert Jogerst, was commissioned to complete the Christ of the Ohio Statue which stands high atop the highest hill at Troy in Perry County.

MAP OF SPENCER COUNTY



C. SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Population and household information has been examined and utilized to help Spencer County prepare for the future growth.

1. POPULATION TRENDS AND FORECASTS

The size and growth rate of the population within the planning area is an important factor in the comprehensive planning process. As a city or county grows so too does the demand for additional social services and community facilities.

Spencer County had a population of 19,810 in 2020. In 2010, the population was 20,952. Between 2010 and 2020, the population of Spencer County has decreased by 1,142 which is a 5.5% decrease.

2. POPULATION DENSITY

Spencer County consists of 396 square miles, with a population density of 50 people per square mile. This average is well below the state population density of 186.8 persons per square mile. This density figure reinforces the rural nature of the county.

3. HOUSEHOLD TRENDS AND FORECASTS

The number of households in Spencer County is a function of a variety of factors, including:

- the number of persons over the age of 20 who form households;
- the housing supply and economic conditions;
- individual decisions regarding marriage, divorce, and childbearing.

The U.S. Bureau of Census reports that “..there have been considerable shifts in the choices American Adults have Made concerning Family Formation and dissolution, and these choices are clearly reflected in the changing composition of households an families.”

The Census Report continues by stating, “The number of Married-couple households with children present (two-parent households) has declined since 1970, but the number of one-parent households has more than doubled.”

“Although non-family households accounted for most of the net increase in households from 1975 to 1985, family households have been the major component of household increase since 1980.”

Most of the increase in the number of family households since 1980 has been attributable to families maintained by a man or woman with no spouse present, and a substantial majority of these ‘other families’ were maintained by women. Compared with the counterparts in 1970, women maintaining families in 1982 were young, more likely to be never married or divorced, and more likely to be Black or of Spanish origin.”

The U.S. Bureau of Census also reported in its 2020 reports that the size of the average household in 2020, 2.54 persons, has held as the average for the preceding five (5) years.

Table 1 demonstrates the correlation between age distribution and household size in Spencer County. According to 2019 census data, there were 8,127 households in Spencer County with an average household size of 2.48 persons per household. When broken down by age, 53.1% of each household was between the ages of 20-59. Only 26.9% of each household was less than 19 years of age and only 20.0% was 60 years of age or older. All three of these age groups are projected to decrease by 2021, thus it could be projected that the average household size may follow the national trend and decline as well.

Ages:	Amount:	Percentage:
Preschool (0 to 4)	1,118	5.5%
School Age (5 to 17)	3,408	16.7%
College Age (18 to 24)	1,527	7.5%

Young Adult (25 to 44)	4,511	22.1%
Older Adult (45 to 64)	5,943	29.1%
Older (65 plus)	3,940	19.3%
Median Age	44.0	

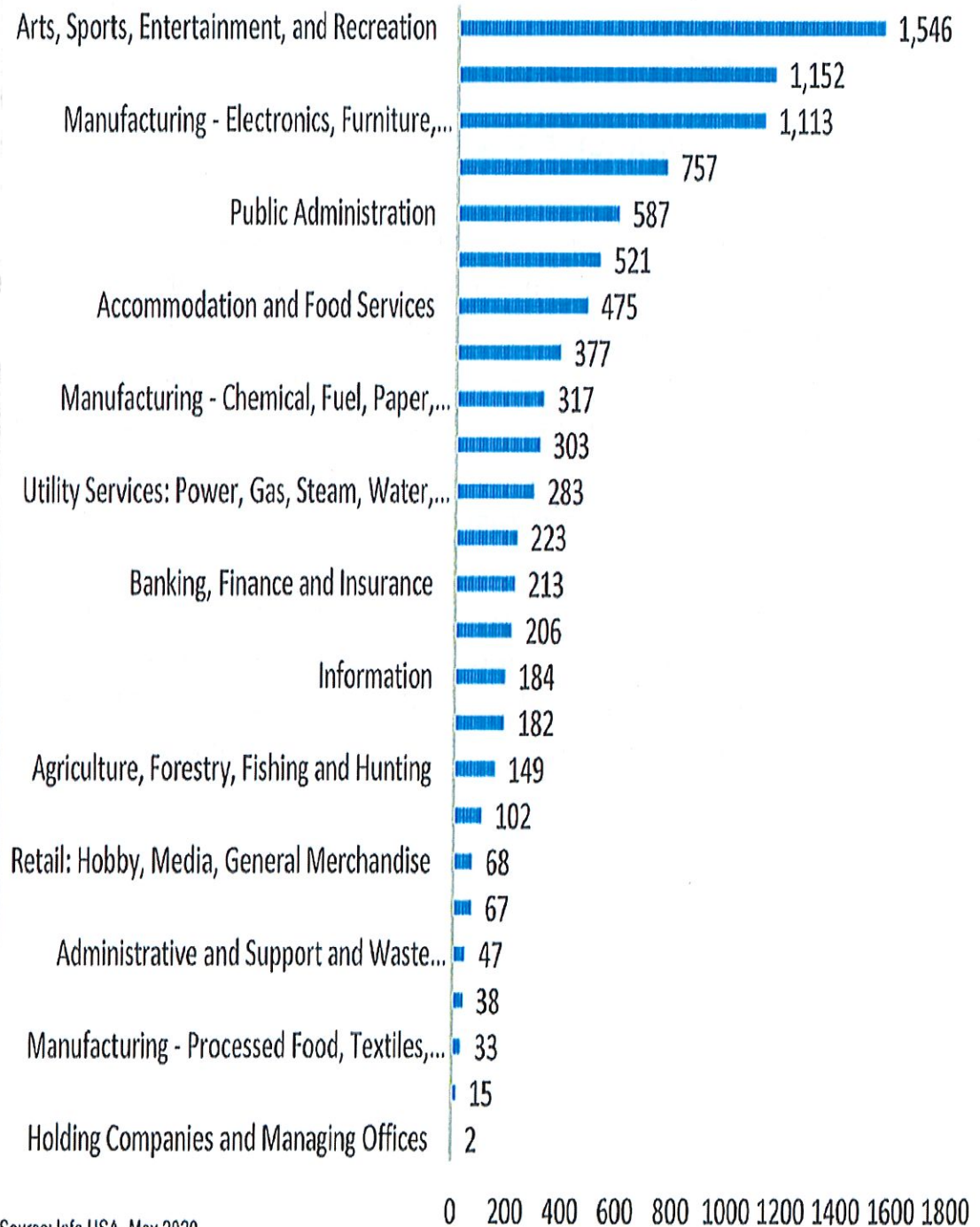
D. ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The objective of this section and the social characteristics section is to provide the Plan Commission with a solid base of demographic information to assist in the planning of public services and facilities. While the social characteristics section focused on population and households, this section focuses on people, employment, income, housing, and education.

1. People and Employment

The U.S. Census reports indicate that in 2019, the majority of the employed labor force in Spencer County was employed in manufacturing and the education field. Table 2 shows the total employment by industry for Spencer County.

TOP INDUSTRIES BY JOB COUNT



2. People and Income

According to the 2019 U.S. Bureau of Census, the median household income for Spencer County was fifty seven thousand three hundred and five dollars (\$57,305). The median family income was thirty one thousand two hundred eighty seven dollars (\$31,287). The median household income for the state is thirty thousand five dollars (\$30,005), and the median family income for the state was fifty six thousand three hundred three dollars (\$56,303). Therefore, Spencer County's median household income is slightly higher than the state. The median family income, however, is higher in Spencer County than the state as a whole.

3. People and Housing

For 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Census reported that there were a total of 9,182 housing units in Spencer County. Of those 9,182 units, 81.9 percent were owner occupied. In comparison, only sixty-nine percent (69%) of housing units in the state are owner occupied.

4. People and Education

Income and education are closely linked when analyzing economic data for a city or county. In Spencer County, 15.63% of the population have attained at least a bachelors degree, while 91% have attained at least a high school diploma. This education division relates closely to the division of blue and white collar workers.

C. EXISTING LAND USE

In establishing a comprehensive plan, it is important to understand the existing distribution of land uses in the county. For purposes of this plan, general land use patterns are noted and areas of similar uses are designated into the following broad categories: agriculture, residential,

commercial/business, industrial, public and floodplain. All land within the county was designated one of the above land uses. Figure 4 shows the existing land uses in the county.

Agriculture is the predominant existing land use in Spencer County. The agricultural designation includes all general farming or agricultural uses as well as residences, barns, storage buildings, or other structures directly associated with agricultural production or operations. White areas in Figure 4 (Existing land Use map) are the areas designated as agriculture.

Spencer County's unique geographical location is the cause of the second most dominate land use in the county: floodplains. The Ohio River to the south and the large expanses of flat floodplain along the river in the southern portion of the county have created flood hazard areas along the river. In addition, the drainage coming south from the Anderson River (eastern border of county) and the Little Pigeon Creek (western boundary of county) has helped to enlarge that flood hazard area, especially near their confluence. Many other smaller tributaries, streams and creeks flow south from the upland areas to further add to the flood hazard area.

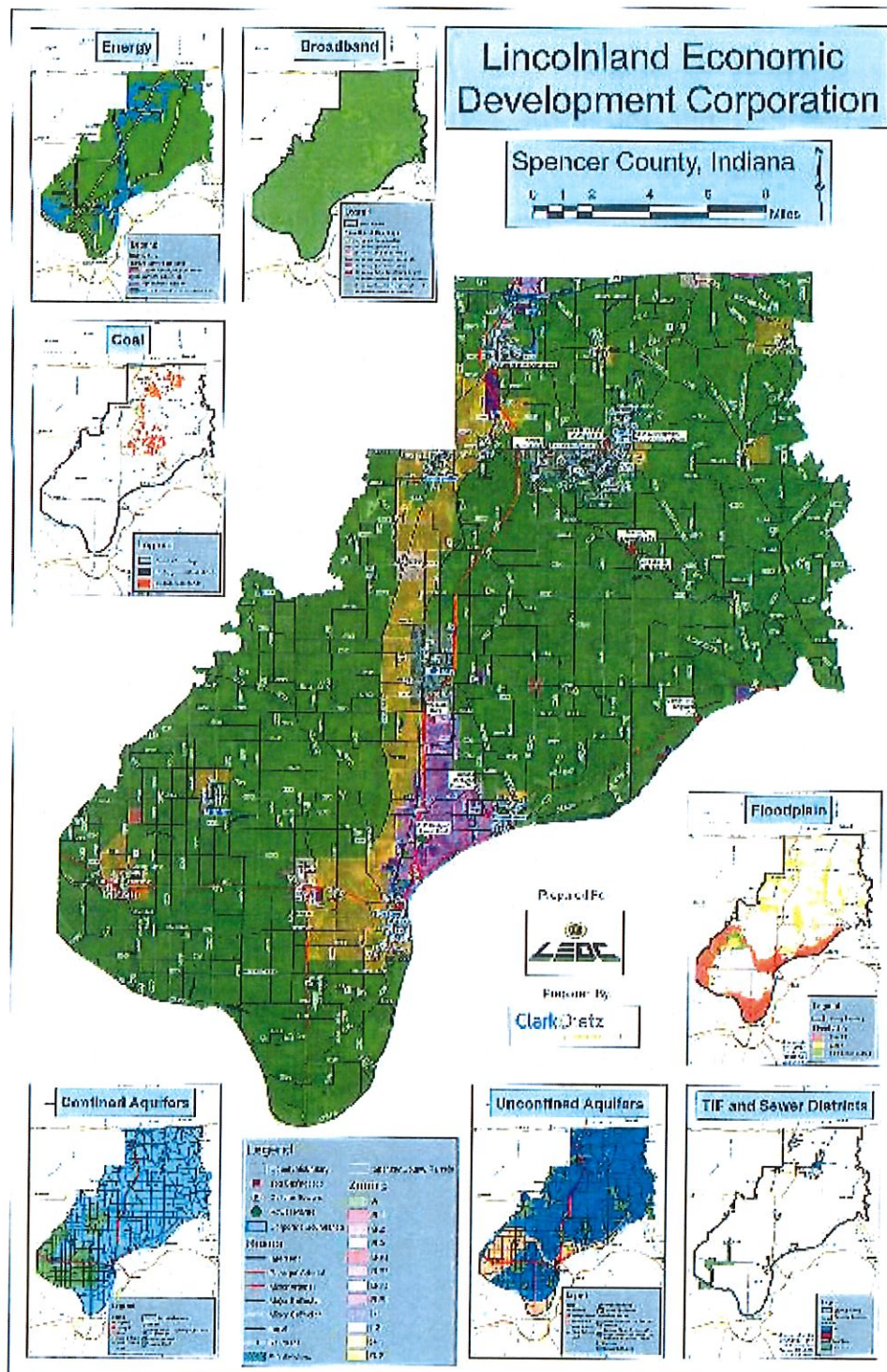
In all, nearly 15% of Spencer County falls under the floodplain designation. Floodplains are noted in light blue on Figure 4 (Existing Land Use Map). For additional information concerning floodplains, see page 28.

There are also many areas that are designated industrial on the existing land use map. Generally, industrial uses include manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale, and distribution activity. Additional industrial uses include mining and excavating, and a great deal of the industrial land uses noted. The industrial designated areas are purple on Figure 4 (Existing Land Use Map).

Another significant land use noted on Figure 4 is the residential land use. Residential uses include all types of housing (with the exception of farm residences associated directly with agriculture-see above). Housing types that fall under the residential designation include: single family homes, duplexes, apartments, mobile homes, and manufactured homes. Residential patterns are easily identifiable especially along the main thoroughfares through the county. Large residential areas have been noted throughout the rural areas of Spencer County, especially in the southern portion of the county. The residential uses are noted in yellow on Figure 4 (Existing Land Use Map).

Commercial uses and businesses are designated under the Commercial designation on the Existing Land Use Map. Commercial areas include retail shops, personal service facilities, healthcare facilities, businesses, restaurants, auto dealerships and agri-business establishments. The Commercial areas are noted in orange on Figure 4 (Existing Land Use Map).

Public areas are noted in dark green on Figure 3 (Existing Land Use Map). Public uses include any publicly-owned land used for public use. Uses that fall into this category include public schools; local, state, and county parks; state forests; historic sites; and university parcels. Several public land uses are noted on Figure 4 (Existing Land Use Map), the most notable and largest being the Lincoln State Park west of Santa Claus.



It is important to note that the incorporated towns of Chrisney, Dale, Gentryville, Grandview, Richland, Rockport and Santa Claus are not included on Figure 3 (Existing Land Use Map) and fall under a zoning jurisdiction other than Spencer County Plan Commission.

It is evident that Spencer County is still a predominantly rural county. The random expansion of land uses in the county demonstrates the urgent need for comprehensive planning and zoning in order to better plan for growth and direct land use in accordance with the specified goals and objectives of the community.

F EXISTING TRANSPORTATION PATTERNS

Transportation in Spencer County occurs in many different ways. The intermodal nature of transportation provides for the movement of people and goods by road, rail, air, and water. In order to best plan for future growth and development, it is important to inventory, assess, and understand the existing transportation functions in the county. The following descriptions outline the existing transportation patterns within Spencer County and identifies opportunities for expansion and enhancement.

1. Roadways

The roads that make up the thoroughfare system in Spencer County exhibit different characteristics based on the function they perform. Roadway types range from interstate highways to local gravel roads. A standardized street functional classification system is used by the Indiana Department of Transportation to describe various roadways. This system groups roadways by their principal use and can be used to compare and analyze the overall circulation system. The roadway classifications used in this plan are: interstate, rural minor arterial, rural major collector and rural minor collector. All other roadways are considered rural local roadways. There are over 744.01 miles of county roads in Spencer County.

Only one interstate comes into Spencer County. Interstate 64 runs east-west across two portions of the northern edge of the county. One interchange exists at US 231 just north of Dale. A second interchange serves Spencer County via S.R. 162 just north of Santa Claus. The interchange, however, is north of the Spencer County line in Dubois County. Interstates are designed for high speed and typically have a 300' wide right-of-ways and limited access.

Arterials typically have at-grade intersections to allow high speed travel in non-congested areas and connect to the interstates and other arterial roadways. SR 161 between SR 66 and the Ohio River is classified as a rural minor arterial as is SR 66 between the western county line and its intersection with US 231 just northeast of Rockport. These two stretches of highways are the only rural minor arterial roadways within Spencer County.

Rural minor and major collectors within the county include US 231, SR 62, SR 162, SR 545, SR 245, SR 161, SR 66, SR 70, as well as many other county roads. The purpose of these roadways is to collect local traffic and move it to high-volume arterials. These roadways provide convenient access to adjacent land uses.

Local roadways make up the remainder of the county's roads. These roads allow additional access to the higher volume collectors and arterials. Convenient access to adjacent land uses is provided.

2. Railways

Two railroad lines operate in Spencer County. The Southern Railroad enters the county from the north from Jasper and Huntingburg. The line enters the northern portion of the county just east of the I-64/US 231 interchange and passes south along the eastern edge of Dale and south to Lincoln City. From there, the line runs southeast out of Lincoln City and through Clay and Huff Townships. The line passes through Buffaloville,

Lamar and Evanston before crossing the Anderson River One mile northeast of Maxville. This line carries freight and minerals. The second railroad branches off of the southern Railroad at Lincoln City and cuts south through Jackson, Grass, and Ohio Townships and terminates at AEP.

3. River Transport

No commercial passenger ports exist in Spencer County. However, some industrial ports exist for the transportation of coal and aggregates.

4. Airports

No commercial airports operate out of Spencer County. All access to the county by air comes via airports in neighboring areas. The main airport in the area is the Evansville Regional Airport, approximately 30 miles to the west. The airport is easily accessible to Spencer County via I-64 or SR 62. Owensboro Daviess County Airport is also available approximately 15 miles south of Rockport. Interstate 64 also makes Louisville International Airport easily accessible from Spencer County. Two small airports exist nearby that can serve the county: Dubois County Airport, approximately 6 miles north of the county line on US 231, and Perry County Municipal Airport, 14 miles east of the County line on SR 145 in Perry County.

G AGRICULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Agriculture is an important industry in Spencer County. Of the 396 square miles of land in Spencer County, 169,428 acres were used for farming purposes in 2017. There were 665 farms operating in the county in 2017. In addition, data indicates that agriculture employs 5.3% of the county labor force (approximately 522 persons).

It is also important to look at the production from these farms to see how the industry compares to that of the state. The table below contains a

breakdown of the production of selected crops in Spencer County and Indiana.

	Corn	Soybeans	Hay
SPENCER COUNTY	9,423,087	3,529,312	21,323
INDIANA	980,332,687	319,049,039	1,431,138

H PUBLIC SERVICES & UTILITIES

An inventory of public services has been included to indicate existing facilities and how they can be used to help meet future demands for services. The presence of public utilities such as sanitary sewers, water, telephone service, electricity and internet access are vital to attracting new growth, development and commerce to the county.

1. Electric Services

Several utilities serve Spencer County. Electric service to the county is provided by two companies: Southern Indiana Power and Center Point Energy.

2. Gas Services

Gas Utilities are supplied by several separate entities throughout the county. These suppliers include: Center Point Energy, Chrisney Municipal, Community Natural Gas, and Ohio Valley Gas.

3. Water Services

The county's water needs are also supplied by many various providers. Gentryville, Santa Claus, Dale, Grandview, Chrisney and Rockport are all served by public water utilities. Reo Water and Finch Newton are supplied

by non-profit ownership. Santa La Hill is supplied by private provider. St Henry Water provides water to the area north of I-64.

4. Sanitary Sewer Service.

Five Spencer County Communities have sanitary sewer systems: Rockport (Rockport Municipal), Chrisney (Chrisney Water Department), Dale (Dale Municipal), Grandview (Grandview Municipal), Santa Claus (Santa Claus Water), St Meinrad, Lamar, Fulda, Richland and Hatfield (Luce Township Sewer District), Gentryville and Mariah Hill. Evanston has a community above ground system.

5. Solid Waste Services

Spencer County Solid Waste now operated seven (7) drop off sites, that accept: newspaper, cardboard, office paper, magazines, Plastic #1 (drinking bottles), Plastic #2 (milk jugs, detergent bottles, etc.), plastic shopping bags, glass steel cans, aluminum cans, hardback books, light bulbs, batteries, cell phones, antifreeze, oil, oil filters and thermometers. The Chrisney drop off site accepts large items. At their office they accept: E-waste, medications, sharps, propane tanks, Hazardous Household Waste (paint/chemicals), and tires. E-Waste and tires are special programs and have a fee.

They also offer a business recycling route (they provide the containers and pick up every other week, cardboard dumpsters for businesses, tire amnesty days, med take back days, river sweep and special Saturdays that they are open to accept everything not accepted at the sites).

The site locations are: Chrisney, Dale, Evanston, Hatfield, Rockport, Santa Claus and St Meinrad.

6. Police Services

Current there are five different police agencies operate within Spencer County. The Spencer County Sheriff Department operates out of Rockport

with seventeen (17) full-time officers and three (3) volunteer officers. Rockport has five (5), Dale has two (2) and Santa Claus has five (5) full time officers. Gentryville and Chrisney have only one part time police officer per town. The combined force of these agencies equals twenty-eight (28) full time officers, two (2) part time officers and three (3) volunteer officers.

7. Fire Protection Services

Nine (9) different volunteer fire departments exist within Spencer County with a total manpower of 180 volunteers. The following fire departments operate within Spencer County: Chrisney Fire Department, Carter Fire District, Grandview Fire Department, Jackson Township Fire Department, Luce Fire Territory, New Boston Fire Corporation, Ohio Township Fire Department, St Meinrad Abbey Fire Department, St Meinrad Town Fire Department and the Santa Claus Fire Department.

8. Educational Services

Spencer County is broken down into two consolidated school districts: North Spencer School Corporation and the South Spencer School Corporation.

For the school year 2020/2021 Spencer County had 3,204 students enrolled in its two school systems and one parochial school. The dropout rate for both school systems for 2020 was 10%. This average is below the state average of 11%. Also for this time period, Spencer County had 12.1% of the county population, enrolled in college. This average is under the state average of 22%. For educational attainment, Spencer County falls just below the state averages, with 46% attaining at least a high school diploma, and 9.2% attaining a bachelor's degree or higher. The pupil-teacher ratio for the county varied averaging 17.95 pupils per teacher in grades 1-6m and

19.45 pupils per teacher in grades 7-12. No state numbers or averages were available for comparison. Both school systems have a very good pupil to student ratio. The average S.A.T. scores in Spencer County in 2018-2020 closely resembled the statewide average. The state average score in 2020 was 1268; Spencer County's average S.A.T. scores in 2018-2020 was 1111. Finally, the table explores teacher salaries. The average salary at the North Spencer School Corporation was \$43,424.00, and the average salary at South Spencer School Corporation was \$44,606.00 for a county average of \$44,015.00. That average is below the state average salary of \$51,119.00.

I Recreation

A diverse, yet limited range of recreational opportunities are available in Spencer County. These activities occur on both public and private land. There has typically been little coordination between the various recreational providers throughout the county and this has led to deficiencies in some activities and repetition in others.

Private recreation is provided at many locations throughout the county. Typically, user fees are charged and maintenance is performed as needed. According to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Outdoor Recreation, many privately owned recreation areas are in operation in Spencer County. The activities they provide include camping and golfing.

The county currently has five park & recreation boards within the county. One is a county board, and four are municipal boards. They include: Spencer County, Dale, Grandview, Rockport, and Santa Claus. Several communities have public parks with various recreational opportunities.

There is one state park, Lincoln State Park, in the county. The park offers a large variety of outdoor recreational activities on its 1,747 acre site.

There is also one property administered by the National Park Service: Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial. This site contains 184 acres and offers limited recreational activities with interpretive historical exhibits.

According to IDNR, there are 369 acres of local public recreation areas in Spencer County including all local community and county parks. Lincoln State Parks consists of 1,747 acres and the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial consists of 200 acres. Local, state, and federal recreation providers comprise a total of 3,728 acres. The ratio of population to recreation land is 186.4 acres per 1000 people in Spencer County. This ratio is considerably higher than the statewide figure of 130 acres per 1000 people in Indiana. Based on this observation, Spencer County offers its residents many recreational opportunities. A surplus of state and federal recreation lands in the county offers unique recreational and interpretative programs to residents, although open access to local recreation may be somewhat limited in some area of the county.

K. NATURAL SYSTEMS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1. Geology and Surface Mines

Topography in the county ranges from level floodplains in the southern portion to strongly dissected hilly uplands. The rugged terrain is mostly in the northern portion of the county. The upland soils consist mostly on formations of shale and sandstone that have a capping of silty loess ranging from over 20 feet thick in the southwestern part of the county to about 3 feet thick in the northeastern part of the county. The main source of the loess was the lowlands along the Wabash and Ohio Rivers to the west and southwest.

The geology of Spencer County is expressed most notably by the production of coal. The southwestern tip of Indiana is part of the Illinois Coal Basin. As of 2019 statistics, Indiana mines were 29.7

million tons of coal annually. This represented a 24% reduction from the peak production recorded in 2014.

The I.D.N.R. Division of Reclamation is responsible for regulating the mining of coal and the restoration of lands disturbed by coal extraction.

2. Forestry Products

Nearly twenty-five percent (25%) of Spencer County is covered by forest. The majority of this coverage is focused in three areas: the west-central part of the county between Gentryville and Santa Claus, the northeast section of the county northeast of Santa Claus, and along the Ohio River.

Spencer County contains 7,500 acres of private classified forests, and 54,600 acres of private unclassified forests. Forestry is important to the county's economy. The industry contributes to the county's economy by "providing a source of jobs and income to businesses and individuals involved in the management and harvesting of forest products. These products in turn provide a ready source of raw materials for the areas wood and finished furniture industries". The forest land also provides wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. Although forestry is not as prevalent in Spencer County as it is in the surrounding counties, it does contribute to the industry and economy of the county.

3. Water Resources and Drainage

It has been reported that groundwater resources in Spencer County are for the most part extremely inadequate to support most types of development. This statement holds true for the northern half of Spencer County. However, areas in the southern half of the county near the Ohio River, and areas close to other streams and rivers, are extremely adequate with some areas capable of a yield of 1000 gallons per minute or more. The abundance of natural waterways

helps make groundwater more available in Spencer County. Currently, the only known contamination of the groundwater in Spencer County is an area south and southeast of the property where Barmet used to operate.

Spencer County has an abundance of surface drains throughout the county. By and large, most of the surface streams in Spencer County flow south into the Ohio River. Waterways in Spencer County include the Ohio River, The Anderson River, Little Pigeon Creek, Sandy Creek, Garrett Creek, Coney Creek, Little Sandy Creek, and numerous other creeks, drains and ditches. In addition, five (5) lakes of 20 acres or more exist in Spencer County. They include: Chrisney Lake (26 acres), Christmas Lake (200 acres), Dale Reservoir (33 acres), Lake Lincoln (58 acres), and Noel Lake (20 acres).

4. Wetlands

Wetlands are natural systems that filter water before it enters into the ground water table, and help support vegetation and wildlife. Wetlands are often found within a floodplain in the bottom lands near streams or drainage ditches, but also can exist alone with no relationship to rivers or streams. The definition of a wetland is based on three parameters:

1. wetland-based vegetation
2. wetland-type (hydric) soils, and
3. the presence of water in or above the ground on site for a minimum period of time.

Wetlands are widely distributed throughout Spencer County, especially along the Ohio River and the other streams and rivers in the county. Created wetlands are common within small farm ponds and drainage ditches. The existence of a wetland on either an urban

or rural site may carry with it federal or state restrictions on development of the site. If a landowner desires to develop or alter a suspected wetland area, the landowner should contact the County Extension Agent; the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water; or the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Field Office for an explanation of current wetland regulations. Mapping of identified wetlands is available through the County Soil Conservation Service office and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Map Sales.

5. Floodplains

Floodplains are a key factor when planning for future development. A floodplain consists of areas on both sides of a water body that is prone to both seasonal and intermittent flooding. High water tables, insurance restrictions, and other problems with potential groundwater contamination can severely restrict or prohibit development within a floodplain. Typically, only land uses compatible with these severe limitations are allowed. Such used would include agriculture, forestry, recreation, and open space. All development allowed within a floodplain should be limited to uses that do not diminish the surface water quality, do not contribute to increased flood stages, or risk contaminating the groundwater aquifers.

Floodplains in Spencer County are defined on the official maps produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA defines the floodplain as the zone designated as the area(s) in a river valley that would be light inundated in a 100 year storm. Flood hazard mapping can be obtained from FEMA or the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Division of Water. State and federal permits may be required for development in these areas.

Many acres of land within Spencer County fall within the floodplain designation. The floodplains in Spencer County have been mapped on the Existing Land Use Map (Figure 3, page 12). The floodplain of

the streams and creeks that flow into the Ohio River, have created an extensive flood hazard area in the southern portion of the county. Large floodplains also exist along the Little Pigeon Creek near its confluence with the Ohio River. Many other substantial floodplains exist throughout the county along the many other streams and rivers. Because of the high potential for flooding, most of the incorporated cities and towns in the county have identified flood hazard areas. Additional floodplains may occur that are not mapped on the land use map, but still meet the criteria for a permit required by IDNR.

6. Air & Water Quality

According to records, Spencer County has been designated as being in compliance with all federal and state air quality standards. Water contamination has also been checked and the only contamination is in an area south and southwest of where Barmet previously operated in Spencer County.

CHAPTER II – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan portrays an idealized vision of Spencer County's future. The following goals, objectives and strategies are based on the issues identified by the public during the planning process used to prepare this document. The recommendations of this plan are a product of public interest and initiative, created to guide future development decisions in both the short and long term.

The strategies will require careful monitoring to evaluate their appropriateness in light of changing economic and social conditions. The Comprehensive Plan and its recommendations should be updated periodically (every five years) to insure that it reflects current county-wide needs and trends that may impact development.

B. STATEMENT OF POLICY

1. Land Use Development within the Jurisdiction:

It shall be the policy of the Spencer County Comprehensive planning, Zoning and Subdivision process to improve the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Spencer County by providing for planned community growth in areas best suited for development; while safeguarding open space, farmlands, floodplains, and other natural resources; and to provide economic development opportunities along with a continued high quality of life.

2. Development of Public ways, Public Places, Public Lands, Public Structures and Public Utilities:

It shall be the policy of the Spencer County Comprehensive Planning, Zoning, and Subdivision process to provide for future development of transportation systems, utilities (both public and quasi-public), education, recreational facilities, and other public places which will

allow the citizens of Spencer County to continue their high quality of life.

C. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

GOAL 1: PROMOTE PUBLIC UTILITY EXPANSION IN SMALL COMMUNITIES AND NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS.

Objective 1.1: Promote public water/sewer systems in existing small communities through state and federal grant programs.

Objective 1.2: Promote utility expansion and increased capacity for industrial development.

Strategy 1.2a Work with local utilities to promote service for industrial development.

Objective 1.3: Explore port expansion/development along the Ohio River.

Objective 1.4: Continue to monitor rural water service to ensure the long-term capacity that is necessary to serve new growth.

Objective 1.5: Continue to closely monitor the approval of septic sewer installations to minimize the risk of groundwater contamination.

Objective 1.6: Coordinate with utility companies regarding placement of utilities and better define sufficient easement widths.

Objective 1.7: Continue to support the development of community service and growth in and adjacent to existing small towns.

Objective 1.8: Promote housing in existing towns or close to the existing infrastructures.

GOAL 2: IMPLEMENT EXISTING ROAD IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND PROMOTE EXPANDED RAIL SERVICE

Objective 2.1: Explore the availability of rail service to industrial sites.

Strategy 2.1a Closely monitor the status of active rail lines in the county and promote their continued use by area industry.

Objective 2.2: Explore the activation of properties Neighboring Perry County Port Authority for additional rail served properties.

Objective 2.3: Continue to utilize the CEDIT funds to assist in implementing roadway improvements.

GOAL 3: PROMOTE COUNTY-WIDE TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Objective 3.3: Promote and support State and Federal Parks and Historical Attractions in Spencer County.

Objective 3.4: Promote Agritourism in Spencer County. Examples of agritourism vary by areas, but may include: farmers markets, farm visits, roadside markets or stands, U-Pick operations, community supported agriculture, farm museums, corn mazes, cider mills, pumpkin patches, petting farms, on-farm retail such as dairies, creameries, woolen goods, ...

GOAL 4: PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Objective 4.1: Prepare for possible decommissioning of AEP.

Strategy 4.1a Work with AEP, Redevelopment Commission and Port Authority on how to best position the property for other industrial use.

Objective 4.2: Support all types of entrepreneurship.

Objective 4.3: Promote commercial/industrial growth along existing transportation corridors.

Objective 4.4: Provide high speed internet/broadband to all rural areas.

GOAL 5: ENCOURGE FARMING ACTIVITIES IN EXISTING AGRICULTURAL AREAS.

Objective 5.1: Clearly define and promote agricultural activities.

Objective 5.2: Encourage associated industries to utilize agricultural products to promote agribusiness.

Objective 5.3: Minimize conflicts between rural and urban areas.

Strategy 5.3a Encourage the use of buffer strips between new housing or subdivisions and existing farms to minimize conflicts.

Objective 5.4: Preserve and protect agriculture lands within the county.

Strategy 5.4a Include right to farm language as part of the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance to protect farmland.

Strategy 5.4b Preserve productive forest land as an agricultural product.

Strategy 5.4c Continue to support the development of community services and growth in and adjacent to existing towns.

GOAL 6: PROMOTE EXPANSION OF ENVIRONMENTALLY CLEAN INDUSTRY AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Objective 6.1: Create commercial/industrial development standards.

Objective 6.2: Update definitions of the various commercial and industrial uses.

Objective 6.3: Clarify the intent of the various commercial and industrial zoning districts.

Objective 6.4: Encourage value added commercial development that utilizes resources produced in the county such as forestry products and agricultural products.

Objective 6.5: Work towards having a balance of energy development and agricultural use.

GOAL 7: CREATE CLEAR DEFINITIONS OF ALL BUILDING REGULATIONS IN ALL ZONING DISTRICTS

Objective 7.1: Require utility easements of sufficient widths as part of platting process.

Objective 7.2: Develop regulations for buffers between new residential development and existing agricultural uses.

Objective 7.3: Require appropriate infrastructure prior to residential development.

Objective 7.4: Create clear definitions of residential occupancy.

Objective 7.5: Update and enforce the property maintenance ordinance, unsafe building ordinances and burning ordinances.

GOAL 8: PRESERVE AND PROTECT UNIQUE NATURAL RESOURCES INCLUDING TIMBERLAND, FLOOD PLAINS, SOILS AND WATERWAYS.

Objective 8.1: Continue current storm water runoff standards to minimize off site impacts of urban development.

Objective 8.2: Preserve and protect ground water resources through development standards for new development.

Objective 8.3: Promote/develop and upgrade community parks, walking trails and dog parks.

GOAL 9: PROMOTE COMMUNITY WIDE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION REGARDING PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Objective 9.1: Encourage elected officials to become engaged in all aspects of the County and improve transparency of County Officials and Offices.

Objective 9.2: Continue to keep the Spencer County Website up to date with current information.

Objective 9.3: Encourage the scheduling of public meetings at times that make it easier for the general public to attend.

Objective 9.4: Incentivize job creating opportunities.

Objective 9.5: Seat a member of the county plan Commission as a liaison to other local plan commissions in the county as allowed by State Law.

GOAL 10: PROMOTE AND SUPPORT RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Objective 10.1: Support and promote all price points of housing.

Objective 10.2: Promote affordable senior housing.

Objective 10.3: Create a County wide project list for any developers to have access to.

GOAL 11: REVISE THE DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCES AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES TO COMPLY WITH THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, AS NEEDED.

CHAPTER III – Land Use Plan

A. INTRODUCTION

Spencer County's landscape exhibits a rural character. Agricultural fields, rolling hills, isolated forests, and small creeks are dominant features, with homes, businesses, and farm-related structures scattered throughout the scene. The Land Use Plan must attempt to preserve and enhance the county's natural resources and rural character. The plan must accept that growth will occur in the county and must be a tool that will help attract new development. Through a set of carefully designed goals and strategies the plan can allow growth and development to occur, while maintaining the current quality of life and character of the county.

The jurisdiction of this plan is legally defined as the entire area of Spencer County, excluding the incorporated areas of Chrisney, Dale, Gentryville, Richland, Rockport and Santa Claus. These communities do not fall under the jurisdiction of this plan or the county-wide zoning ordinance.

The Land Use & Transportation Plan was created by a careful inventory and analysis of existing patterns of development. Existing development (or lack thereof) reflects past economic, market, and environmental conditions. This pattern provides a point of reference from which to predict future development scenarios, based on recently identified trends and market changes.

B. PROPOSED LAND USE CATEGORIES

It is important to define specific land use categories that are planned to occur within the county. The following general land use descriptions define those activities that typically occur within a specific land use category.

1. Agricultural Land Use

Agricultural land use is defined as land that is used for crops, orchards, forests, and pasture, and which may include production of

food fiber, and livestock; preparation of agricultural products; and agriculture related business.

2. Residential Land Use

Residential land use is defined as land that is primarily used for the construction of residential buildings and public facilities that support residential areas such as schools and churches.

3. Commercial Land Use

The commercial use designation includes retail, professional, business services, restaurants, auto sales and service, personal service establishments and agriculture-related sales and service.

4. Industrial Land Use

The industrial use designation includes manufacturing, wholesale, warehousing, distribution, mining and related mineral processing activities, solid waste facilities, junkyards, etc.

5. Public

The public use designation includes land and facilities set aside for or owned by the public. Such uses may include churches, schools, park facilities, etc.

6. Floodplain

Floodplains as defined on the Federal Emergency Management Agency maps are included in this category.

C. PROPOSED LAND USE DESCRIPTIONS

The following written descriptions illustrate general land use scenarios for future development in Spencer County. These descriptions illustrate general land use scenarios for future development in Spencer County. The following descriptions provide a tool to guide future land use decisions

based on the goals and objectives previously identified. The narrative is organized according to regions of the county that exhibit similar characteristics.

1. Northern Region (Carter and Harrison Townships)

This portion of Spencer County enjoys excellent access to Interstate 64 and is traversed by over six state and federal highways. The proposed land uses are supported by an abundance of property accessible to roadways and land generally suitable for development.

Expanded residential uses are shown west of St Meinrad and east of Marian Hill as an extension of existing development trends. In-fill residential growth is also shown on outparcels and adjacent tracts to the Town of Santa Claus. The expansion of residences north of Fulda on SR 545 is shown as a continued trend. Public sewer and water should be extended to serve these residential growth areas.

Commercial development is planned to extend along the US 231 corridor north of Dale to I-64. Public sewer and water is available in this area and commercial development currently exists in the corridor. Infill commercial development is also shown in an outparcel adjacent to the town of Santa Claus, south of Holiday World on SR 162. Continued commercial development should be promoted within the small towns of Marian Hill, St Meinrad and Fulda to serve these communities.

Expanded industrial development is shown at the I-64 interchange. The Southeast and northeast quadrants of the interchange are served by railroad access, contributing to the suitability for industrial uses. The northwest quadrant is also shown as an industrial parcel. The northern quadrants of this interchange are in need of elevated water storage.

Agriculture is the predominant land use in this area. Much of the land has experienced strip mining in the past and has been reclaimed.

Floodplains somewhat limit development adjacent to Santa Claus on the East and near St Meinrad and Dale.

Publicly owned lands are very evident near Lincoln City. Lincoln State Park and the Lincoln Boyhood Memorial attract thousands of visitors to the area. Commercial uses in Dale and Santa Claus benefit from the tourist industry generated by these parks. These properties are not expected to expand significantly, although Lincoln State Park has target small acquisition parcels on the southeast and western edges of their property.

2. Central Region (Jackson, Grass and Clay Townships)

The central location of Jackson, Grass and Clay townships also allows excellent access to areas both within and outside of the county. The townships have equal access to the north (and I-64) and to the south (Kentucky). The main north-south road through the region is US 231 and many collectors are in place to feed this main roadway. The realignment of US 231 along with the new bridge over the Ohio River, makes areas south of Spencer County even more accessible.

The predominant land use proposed for these townships on the Land Use and Transportation Plan is agriculture. Residential uses have been expanded around those areas where existing residential uses have been developed. In Jackson Township residential uses have been expanded somewhat around Gentryville and the Intersection of US 231 and SR 62. These uses generally consist of infill development between existing residential units. Similar infill housing and a limited expansion of residential uses have also been proposed around other existing residential areas throughout the township.

Commercial uses in these three townships should be kept within existing commercial developments. No new commercial areas have been proposed for the central region.

Existing industrial sites have been noted on the Land Use and Transportation Plan. These sites should retain their Industrial Use designation as long as they remain active.

3. Southern Region: The River Townships (Huff, Hammond, Ohio and Luce Townships)

The river townships are not as easily accessible to I-64 as the other regions. The realignment of US 231 greatly enhances accessibility in this region. In addition, the construction of the new bridge northeast of Rockport also greatly enhanced accessibility to the southern areas of the county. The Main north-south route through this region is US 231. The main east-west route is SR 66. SR 66 is a state scenic route that has been designated as a national scenic byway. The most scenic portion of SR 66 in Spencer County occurs in Huff and Hammond Townships where the road follows the Ohio River because of this, only limited expansion of existing uses has been proposed along this portion of SR 66.

In Huff and Hammond Townships, limited residential expansion has been designated at Grandview, Newtonville, west of Maxville and Chrisney. Existing industrial uses have been noted on the Land Use and Transportation Plan occurs in Ohio Township. With the realignment of US 231 and the new US 231 bridge this township has great opportunities due to excellent access to Kentucky. The existing industrial uses at the US 231 and SR 66 intersection have been greatly expanded due to current river access at that location. Additional industrial uses have been noted at the Reo Industrial park and expanded industrial uses noted north of Patronville.

Residential uses have been expanded southwest of Rockport, as well as the area surrounding Reo. A large residential expansion has also been noted southeast, north and northwest of Patronville.

The only commercial expansion shown in Ohio Township is at Reo.

In Luce Township, residential uses have been expanded at Richland City, Hatfield and Eureka. A large portion of these Townships are in the floodplain.

CHAPTER IV – TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A. INTRODUCTION

Transportation routes have been key factors in the development of Spencer County. Whether the routes opened up land for settlement, or provided a means of transporting goods, these routes have helped define the county as it exists today. Just as previous routes directed past development, it is important to formulate a well thought out Transportation Plan as part of the Spencer County Comprehensive Plan in order to help direct future growth in the county. It is the intent of the Transportation Plan to anticipate the future needs of this system. The overall goal of this section is to make recommendations based on those needs to insure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Transportation routes are not typically limited by the political boundaries of cities, towns, townships and counties. Roadways act as lines of connection between different areas. This plan will offer a county-wide look at the overall system and will aid in the efforts of the county and various municipalities to plan future improvements.

B. TRANSPORTATION PLAN DESCRIPTION

The roadway classifications for Spencer County are explained in greater detail in Chapter 1 on page 16. The following narrative

outlines specific transportation improvements or enhancements that may be necessary to accommodate the growth areas illustrated on the Land Use and Transportation Map (Figure 6).

1. Interstate 64 Corridor

Interstate 64 provided excellent access to the north region of the county and links interstate commerce to the entire area. Two interchanges provide opportunity for development which may require access improvements to allow safe and efficient use of the surrounding properties.

The State Road 162 interchange is located on the Dubois and Spencer County line. This interchange exhibits a noticeable lack of development in Spencer County. This may be due to the steep slopes that limit development within the southern quadrants of the interchange in Spencer County. Development at this interchange in Spencer County seems unlikely due to these severe limitations.

The US 231 interchange north of Dale is much more favorable for development and has exhibited the construction of commercial and industrial uses. The access afforded by both the interchange and an existing rail line to the east makes this a prime location for industrial uses. With the realignment of US 231 and it being a divided four lane highway with limited access to adjacent development parcels. The southeast quadrant will keep a portion of old US 231 intact to provide an access road to existing developed and undeveloped parcels. This roadway should be used for access to all new development in this quadrant. Any direct access off of US 231 will require approval from Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). The southwest quadrant will be accessed by a new service road off of new CR 2050 N. This service road will provide the only access to this quadrant. The

northeast quadrant has access from old US 231, which remained intact up to the location of what was an existing bridge. The northwest quadrant will have access from a new service road off of existing CR 1200 S (county line). Considerable acreage of developable land was created by the construction of the new interchange. It is imperative that the county work closely with possible developers and INDOT to provide sufficient access to meet the needs of each particular type of new land use.

2. The Ohio River Scenic Byway

1992, the Indiana General Assembly passed a resolution creating the Ohio River Scenic Route along SR 66 in Southern Spencer County. With that resolution, the route was established as a state scenic byway that winds through the river valley along the Ohio River from Lawrenceburg to Mount Vernon passing through Spencer County. With the creation of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency ACT (ISTEA) mandating the creation of a national scenic byways program, the Ohio River Scenic Byway was eligible for designation as a national scenic byway and received that status in September of 1996. This designation makes many additional federal funds available for roadway improvements, roadside parks and interpretive areas, visitor's centers, and the like. The new designation will likely increase tourism to the county fueling the local economy. In order to receive the national designation the route was required to have a Corridor Management Plan. A committee called the Ohio River Scenic Route Committee was formed and each county in which the route passes through has a representative on the committee. The committee also has representatives from the Indiana Department of Transportation, Historic Landmarks foundation of Indiana, History Southern Indiana, and the Tourism Division

of the Indiana Department of Commerce. From this committee, needed improvements and new tourist amenities will be developed that will be beneficial for the entire county. The Ohio River Scenic Byway/National Scenic Byway route is marked on the Land Use & Transportation Plan (see Figure 6).

3. RAILROADS

Rail service in the county is crucial to the ability of Spencer County to attract and retain industrial development. Spencer County and the different communities in the county should make every effort to expand these rail lines.

Spencer County Advisory Plan Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2021

The Spencer County Advisory Plan Commission held its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, March 25, 2021. Members in attendance were Robert Reinke, Blake Bunner, Bill Spaetti, Phil Leiberling, Jim Seiler, Jane Lynam, Frank Ingram and David Faulkenberg. Absent was Nick Held.

The meeting was called to order at 6:25 pm by Bob Reinke.

Appointments of Officers for 2021:

Jim Seiler made a motion for Robert Reinke to be appointed President, motion seconded by Bill Spaetti. Motion carried with all in favor.

Jim Seiler made a motion for Phil Leiberling to be appointed Vice President, motion seconded by Jane Lynam. Motion carried with all in favor.

Bill Spaetti made a motion to retain John Wetherill as the Attorney, motion seconded by Frank Ingram. Motion carried with all in favor.

Jane Lynam made a motion for Kay Erwin to remain Plan Commission Administrator, motion seconded by Phil Leiberling. Motion carried with all in favor.

Blake Bunner was introduced as the new County Council appointment, replacing Brian Greulich.

Minutes from the September 27, 2020 meeting stand approved as presented. Phil Leiberling made a motion to approve. Jane Lynam seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.

John explained that we were ready to finish going through the Comprehensive Plan. He explained why we had moved ahead quicker than originally planned. LEDC went before the Board of Commissioners to ask to have an outside agency take the plan over. John's personal concern is that they will come in with a boiler plate template that is used in all 92 counties. He feels that we need to proceed as a board and have a Plan tailored to Spencer County. Jim Seiler also spoke that when they came before the Commissioners the cost was \$50,000.00. He feels that someone looking over the plan after it was completed was not a bad idea. Ms. Erwin has gone through the plan and updated all information. She has highlighted areas that she knew needed updated. She is at this time waiting on information from several different groups to include and update. Ms. Erwin did explain that the area of the old plan that talked about our clean ground water has now changed and will need updated due to the fact that the area around where Barmet was located is now not appropriate for a well due to contamination. John explained that we would have at least two public meetings to get as much input and ideas for new objectives from all different areas of the public. Phil Leiberling asked how we would get

word out about the public meeting. Ms. Erwin explained it would be in the paper and that she would also contact different agencies and towns to inform people about the meeting.

Bill Spaetti brought up the issue of the solar and wind turbine companies that are looking for more property. The board would like to consider an ordinance to address some possible issues. Phil Leiberling said that the Farm Bureau has been talking about this issue and who or what would be charge of the control, be it State or Local government. Mr. Seiler said that Knox County has a very good ordinance in place that we should look at. John Wetherill brought up that the contracts that are being brought to the land owners. He felt they should look at them more carefully. Bill Spaetti questioned the clean up of the solar sites if the company were to file bankruptcy or vacate a site.

Bob Reinke asked if we could get the first public meeting in April?

Frank Ingram said that the Port Authority and the Commissioners need to look to 2028 because AEP will be closed. We would have a great river facility that would be available. He brought up that with AEP closing in the future the property taxes in the County will most probably double for everyone.

A discussion was held on how the public meeting would be handled. The board wanted to be sure that we had a proper sound system so that everyone could be heard. They also talked about either a power point presentation or handing out the plan at the door to people attending.

New/Old Business:

None.

Bill Spaetti made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by _____. Motion passed with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at _____ pm.

Next meeting will be April 22, 2021 at 6:00 pm at the Spencer County Youth and Community Center.

Spencer County Comprehensive Plan
Public Meeting #1
Spencer County Youth and Community Center
April 22, 2021

MEETING SUMMARY:

The first of two public meetings for the Comprehensive Plan began at 6:02 pm at the Spencer County Youth and Community Center. Approximately 62 people attended. The meeting was called to order by Bob Reinke. Bob opened the meeting by introducing all of the board members present. He then turned the meeting over to John Wetherill to explain what we hoped to accomplish with the meeting.

John then opened up the meeting to public comment.

Frank Wike spoke and expressed his concern about solar farms coming into area and did not feel they were safe. He listed several items and articles that he had found that supported his concern that they were not safe.

John Bowen spoke for the Port Authority. He wanted to let everyone know that the Port Authority does exist and wants to be active in Spencer County.

Ron Smith, local builder, spoke to address a subdivision ordinance. It was explained to Mr. Smith that there was a subdivision ordinance in place. Mr. Smith feels the County should step up and give funding to LEDC and the different organizations to bring in industry.

Valerie Schmidt, LEDC, spoke about buffer zones around the incorporated towns. It was explained to Ms. Schmidt that some of the towns had buffer zones in place already.

Chuck Bosko, wants to know if he can send in ideas.

John Hurley spoke for the South Spencer Classroom Teacher Association. He stated that South Spencer has had a student decline. The school's funding is tied to the population of students. The Association believes that there is a lack of affordable housing for everyone. Mr. Hurley stated we are just average residents and would like to be involved and questioned how they can help.

Phil Leiberling asked that Valerie Schmidt to further explain buffer zones. Valerie explained that there are few available lots in any of the towns. She stated that the only Pharmacy in Spencer County is in Rockport. Due to the lack of developable lots in towns, the growth is outside of the towns in the County.

Ferman Yearby, City of Rockport, spoke to explain that the City of Rockport is expanding the water and sewer out and along CR 200 N. They are making a \$17,000,000 investment to upgrade capacity for Industrial growth. Mr. Yearby is also a part of the group that is involved

with the extension of US 231. He feels that it should be extended where it would be the quickest route to I-69. He stated that with AEP leaving in the future, coupled with the additional traffic on US 231, that opens up that area for additional industrial growth.

Duane Walters spoke and questioned what plans are in place for the time AEP closes?

Samuel Huggler is a business owner in Spencer County. He is interested in seeing growth in the area, but he is concerned by the lack of control over the installation of solar panels.

Jay Bickel, a local builder, spoke up and said that he doesn't feel that Solar is a problem and doesn't understand why we are talking about that. He also stated that all he hears is we need housing and shell buildings. He pointed out areas where that has been tried, and they sit empty. He feels that we need to focus on internet and housing. Mr. Bickel feels that there are available lots inside of towns that can be used, you just have to look. He also feels that one of the biggest problems is the Health Department and the process for obtaining a septic permit.

Daniel Knepper, K&K Dirtworks, spoke about his understanding of the Comprehensive Plan. He also would like to see all the rail hubs that are currently in the County added to the Plan. He also pointed out the river ports need added. He was asked to communicate all of his information to the Plan Commission.

Valerie Schmidt suggested adding more to the Tourism section. She would like to add possible building of a sports park and convention centers. If we get more people in the county for events, they may decide that Spencer County is a nice place to move.

Kelly Greulich, Santa Claus, would like to add industrial parks that are in the county.

Kathy Reinke, Chamber of Commerce, feels that communication is not strong enough between all the different groups. She would like to see all groups work together so that everyone knows what is happening in different areas.

The board was asked if we had thought of doing a survey to have for anyone in the County who wanted to respond. The board was also asked if we had thought of using an outside consulting firm to do the plan.

Phil Leiberling made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Frank Ingram. Motion passed with all in favor.

Spencer County Advisory Plan Commission
Spencer County Comprehensive Plan
Public Meeting #2
Spencer County Youth and Community Center
August 26, 2021

MEETING SUMMARY:

The second of two public meetings for the Comprehensive Plan began at 6:00 pm at the Spencer County Youth and Community Center. Approximately 7 people attended. The meeting was called to order by Bob Reinke. Bob opened the meeting by introducing all of the board members present. He explained that we had used past comments to update the Comprehensive Plan. He explained that all comments and suggestions from the current meeting will be taken under advisement and possibly put in the Plan. He then turned the meeting over to John Wetherill to explain what we hoped to accomplish with the meeting.

John Wetherill explained that this would be our last public hearing before the Plan Commission finalized the Comprehensive Plan and turned it over to the Commissioners. John then opened up the meeting to public comment.

Administrator Erwin then spoke about the goals that were presently written for the Comprehensive Plan. All audience members did receive the goals and a power point presentation was also shown. Ms. Erwin went through all of the goals and objectives that we have at this point. As Ms. Erwin went through the presentation she explained that this was a draft, and that it could be updated before we approved the Comprehensive Plan.

Melissa Arnold, Spencer County Tourism Director, brought up some additional items that she would like to see added to the Goals and Objectives. Ms. Erwin asked her to email them to her so that they could be looked at.

John Wetherill spoke again about the potential loss of AEP that has been stated will be in 2028. With the loss of AEP, the tax base will be affected, with all taxing entities suffering financial losses. He also stated that we are mindful that we need housing in the County.

Bill Spaetti inquired about the possibility of the County working with AEP for some ground for a possible river port at Grandview.

John Bowen, Spencer County Port Authority, spoke and explained that they are working very hard to get the board active and initiating a dialogue with AEP.

John Hurley asked if we could find other ways to notify people of public meetings. Several different ideas were discussed.

It was asked if the Comprehensive Plan would be available for the public to see before it was approved. It was explained that, we would include a Draft on the County Website.

Frank Ingram made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Phil Leiberling. Motion passed with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 6:29 pm.

DRAFT

